Study of Surface Topography of 2D and 3D Surfaces using Optical Methods

Proposed Synopsis for Ph.D. Registration

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University Department of Physics
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Researcher:
Sanjay Kumar
Ph.D. Entrance test 2023, Roll No.-15058
M.Sc. in Physics
Ranchi University, Ranchi

Supervisor:
Dr. Rajesh Kumar
Assistant Professor
Department of Physics
St. Xavier's College, Ranchi

1. Title of the Research:

Study of surface topography of 2D and 3D surfaces using optical methods.

2. State-of-the-art:

Surface metrology is a branch where we can study surface features like roughness, texture, patterns, and waviness, etc. This information is important to understand that how materials and components perform. It has lots of importance in fields like material science, electronics, forensic science and biomedical engineering. There are many traditional methods like stylus profilometry which requires contact or touch to the surface to measure information from it. However, these methods are slow and can damage sensitive surfaces. That's why there is requirement of faster non-contact optical techniques. Optical methods are better for measuring sensitive surfaces and can provide higher resolution without physical contact. This research aims to study new optical methods to make more accurate and efficient measurements of surface features [1-2].

In the course of time, many non-contact methods have been developed to overcome the limitations of traditional methods such as interferometry, and confocal microscopy etc. These methods are commonly used in surface metrology. With the help of interferometry, we analyze light interference patterns to get excellent vertical resolution about the surface. However, it faces some difficulties due to noise and artifacts, especially for large or complex surfaces [3]. With the help of confocal microscopy, we can create 3D surface images by removing fuzzy or out-of-focus light. However, it has a narrow depth of focus and requires expensive equipment. So, to overcome these limitations, new methods are required [4-6].

Now, advanced optical imaging methods are being explored that uses multiple angles and computational algorithms. With these techniques we can get high-resolution measurements across large surface areas. They also retain the quality of earlier methods. These new methods have significant potential for industries like material science,

aerospace, electronics, medical and precision manufacturing, where surface quality is very important [7].

Looking ahead, combining advanced imaging techniques with artificial intelligence and machine learning could make surface analysis faster, cheaper, and more accurate. These innovations could improve quality control and could also help to develop better materials and manufacturing technologies.

3. Problem to be Investigated:

In our proposed research work, the following problems will be investigated:

3.1 Capturing images of various 2D and 3D surfaces from different angle to create detailed surface profiles for high-resolution.

3.2 Processing of above recorded images using computational algorithms in Python/MATLAB/SCILAB to study surface topography.

3.3 Theoretical interpretation of computational results obtained through image processing.

4. Objective of the Research and Motivation:

The main goal of this proposed research work is to study surface topography of 2D and 3D surfaces using optical methods so that we could understand surface features.

Need of precision in surface metrology without damaging the sensitive surfaces, present of noise or artifacts with current optical methods and the capability of optical imaging with computational techniques to get better resolution motivates for this proposed research. The topographical study of surfaces will also enhance the nature of examinations in forensic field.

5. Hypothesis:

The hypothesis for this proposed research is:

"Using multi-angle captured images or optical data together with advanced computational techniques or algorithms will give detail surface profile for high resolution and large surface area to overcome the limitations of current methods".

6. Research design and methodology:

The structure of this proposed research is designed to study surface topography of 2D and 3D surfaces using optical methods in surface metrology. The process is divided into several points:

6.1 Literature Review: A thorough review of existing optical surface measurement techniques will help us to understand the benefits and limitations of traditional methods. It will also give knowledge about advanced methods in which we can use images from various angle of illumination gives better results about surface features.

6.2 Sample Selection and Tools to be used for Data Collection: A variety of samples having different materials and shapes will be selected. The surface of these will be illuminated from multiple angles and be recorded the images of diffraction or reflection patterns with the help of optical instruments such as VSC (video Spectral Comparator) or other as per the requirement.

6.3 Computational Analysis and Reconstruction: The recorded images will be processed computationally to reconstruct amplitude and phase by the help of suitable algorithm for surface topography or profiling [8].

6.4 Validation and Assessment: With the help of reference measurements, the reconstructed surface topography or profiles will be verified to check the accuracy of the reconstruction methods. Important parameters will be evaluated to validate the proposed methods.

7. Techniques Used in the Research:

This proposed research concentrates on better optical techniques for high-resolution measurement of surface properties. These methods include diffraction, reflection, and computational imaging techniques to reconstruct surface profiles with high accuracy [9].

7.1 Fourier Optics:

Fourier optics provides the theoretical basis for analyzing light interaction with surfaces [10]. It allows the relationship between the light field at the object plane and the detector plane to be described in the Fourier domain. The general equation for diffraction can be represented as:

$$U(x',y') = \frac{e^{ikz}}{i\lambda z}\iint U(x,y)\exp(\frac{ik}{2z}((x'-x)^2+(y'-y)^2))dxdy$$

Where:

U (x', y') represents the complex field at the detector plane, U (x, y) is the light field at the object plane, z is the distance between the object and detector, k is the wavenumber, and λ is the wavelength of light.

This relationship helps in extracting surface information from the diffraction patterns of light.

7.2 Computational Reconstruction and Phase Retrieval:

To reconstruct accurate surface topographies, phase retrieval algorithms are employed to estimate both amplitude and phase information from intensity measurements. One commonly used phase retrieval technique is the Gerchberg-Saxton algorithm, which iteratively refines phase estimates [11-12]. However, other phase retrieval methods or techniques can also be used to achieve similar results, each offering unique advantages depending on the specific application and imaging conditions [13-23]. The general steps of **Gerchberg-Saxton algorithm** are as follows:

1. Start with an initial guess of the phase distribution ϕ_0 (x, y),
2. Compute the Fourier transform to obtain an estimate of the diffraction pattern:

$$U(x',y') = F\{U(x,y)e^{i\phi_o(x,y)}\}$$

3. Replace the modulus of the computed diffraction pattern with the measured intensity:

$$U_{new}(x', y') = \frac{U(x', y')}{|U(x', y')|}\sqrt{I_{measured}(x', y')}$$

4. Perform an inverse Fourier transform to update the object estimate in the spatial domain.

This process is repeated iteratively until the reconstructed diffraction pattern converges with the measured intensity, thereby reconstructing the full wavefront, including phase. This computational analysis would be done with the help of PYTHON/ MATLAB/ SCILAB.

7.3 Angular Diversity:

Using multiple illumination angles is crucial to increasing the resolution and field of view. The diffraction pattern from each angle provides unique spatial frequency information, enhancing the reconstructed surface profile.

For a given illumination angle θ the diffraction pattern can be described as:

$$U_{\theta}(x', y') = F\left\{U(x, y)e^{i\frac{2\pi}{\lambda}\sin(\theta).x}\right\}$$

The diverse angles provide unique spatial frequency information, leading to enhanced surface details that might otherwise be missed with traditional imaging methods.

7.4 Surface Topography Reconstruction:

The surface height h(x, y) is proportional to the retrieved phase ϕ(x, y), and can be written as:

$$h(x, y) = \frac{\lambda}{4\pi n}\phi(x, y)$$

Where n is the refractive index of the medium and λ is the wavelength of the illumination light. This equation converts phase information into physical surface height [24-26].

7.5 Advantages over Traditional Methods:

Using multiple illumination angles and computational reconstruction offers several benefits over traditional methods:

Higher resolution: Combining data from different angles results in super-resolution. This overcomes the usual trade-off between resolution and field of view seen in traditional techniques.

Non-contact: These methods don't require physical contact with the sample. This is especially useful for sensitive surfaces or materials that could be damaged by contact-based methods.

Faster and more flexible: With the help of Computational techniques, we don't need any mechanical scanning for quicker measurements over larger areas which makes it faster and more flexible.

8. Significance of the Research:

This proposed research could significantly study surface topography of 2D and 3D surfaces using optical methods in surface metrology. It will give us a more accurate, structured, and detailed way to analyze surface features by combining amplitude and phase data. This is extremely valuable in fields like material science, microelectronics, forensic science, optics, and biomedical engineering, where precision is very important.

This study will investigate how advanced optical-computational techniques can measure complex surfaces in less time and efforts than traditional methods. Its adaptability with various materials and surfaces will be explored. By the use of computational algorithms, we can improve real-time surface analysis.

8.1 Present day problem: Fields like material science, microelectronics, forensic science, optics, aerospace and biomedical engineering, require precise surface measurements to study surface features, but current methods face several challenges. There are many existing techniques which do not provide the precision needed for modern products, when

it comes to small scales. Traditional contact-based methods, like stylus profilometry, are too slow for surface profiling and also can damage sensitive surfaces, while method like interferometry struggle with complex, rough, or opaque surfaces due to noise and artifacts which leads to inaccurate results. Additionally, advanced measurement systems are expensive and need specialization to accessible in many industries. Also there are many quality control methods which consume excessive resources. So, there is the need for more sustainable solutions.

8.2 Need of the society: To overcome with the current challenges in surface metrology, we need new solutions which can provide better accuracy for precise measurements, especially for sensitive surfaces. Industry requires faster and scalable methods which will be suitable for both small and large-scale production. Techniques should be adjustable so that we can measure a wide range of surfaces, from metals to biological tissues. We need the solutions which make these technologies affordable to all and eco-friendly. This proposed research aims to study a new approach that combines advanced imaging techniques and computational methods to satisfy the need which can provide more accurate, fast, and structured surface measurements for industries.

8.3 Contribution to the existing knowledge: This proposed research will significantly enhance the study of surface metrology with the help of non-contact and high-accuracy method which covers large areas and stabilizes resolution with field of view. It will improve the measurement of complex and sensitive surfaces which help us to expand new possibilities for industries like electronics, material science, forensic science, optics and biomedical engineering. With the help of computational imaging and machine learning, this approach will increase the speed of data processing by maintaining the accuracy so that we can do surface analysis faster and more reliable. Additionally, this method will encourage more eco-friendly practices in surface measurement and also inspire us to do research by combining optical techniques with AI for better imaging. Overall, this proposed research will improve surface measurement by making it more precise, affordable, and eco-friendly across various industries.

9. Future work:

Future work in this proposed research can concentrate on multiple areas to enhance surface measurement. For the study of complex surfaces, advanced computational algorithms could be used to make surface reconstruction faster and more accurate. By integrating advanced imaging technologies, like adaptive optics, we can further improve resolution. We can do specific type of measurements by expanding the method which is very important to industries such as aerospace, automotive, and nanotechnology. By developing real-time surface measurements systems, we could enable immediate feedback in speedy manufacturing settings. We could automate data analysis and reduce errors by integrating AI and machine learning. Additionally, we can create portable systems for inaccessible areas to increase practicality. Future efforts could focus on to make more sustainable surface measurement process by reducing energy use and the environmental impact of the technology. These directions will help to make surface measurement technology more accessible, efficient, and adaptable across various sectors.

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